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PP RUEHMA RUEHPA  
DE RUEHNMM #0632 1790856  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
P 270856Z JUN 08  
FM AMEMBASSY NIAMEY  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4393  
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUZEHAA/CDR USEUCOM INTEL VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY  
RHMFIISS/CDR USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

UNCLAS NIAMEY 000632

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PGOV KCOR ASEC CASC NG

SUBJECT: NIGER: FORMER PRIME MINISTER JAILED

REF: NIAMEY 624 AND PREVIOUS

¶1. Former Prime Minister Hama Amadou was detained the afternoon of June 26 on charges that he misused funds meant to support the private press (reftels).

¶2. Several hundred Amadou supporters gathered outside the courthouse where he was being held that afternoon. They tried to block the police from taking him from the courthouse, prompting the police to use teargas and batons to disperse the crowd. A private television station aired footage of event that evening. The GON television station did not mention the detention or related events. The Interior Minister reported that nine people were injured in the fray, although Amadou's supporters claims that the toll was higher. Police also used tear gas to disperse a crowd that had gathered outside of Amadou's house.

¶3. Amadou was transported to the maximum security Koutoukale prison some 50 kms outside of Niamey on the road to Tillabery the evening of June 26.

¶4. There were no disturbances in Niamey the morning of June 27. An unrelated, previously scheduled, demonstration by a coalition of civil society groups under the umbrella coalition "Convergence Citoyen" occurred without incident.

ALLEN